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THE COST
OF
VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS
AND OF
BOARD SCHOOLS

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THERE is a growing feeling that School Boards have an expensive way of managing their business, and that the system which they seek to displace accomplished very much more in return for the funds placed at its disposal. I propose to institute a comparison between the cost of the two systems, and, so far as I am able to do so, between their educational results.

Before comparing the cost of particular Schools managed by voluntary managers with those under School Boards, it seems desirable to set forth a general view of the cost of the Board School system as a whole, so far as it is as yet developed, and to compare it with the expenditure of the Education Department, as both have to deal with large sums of money, and have to make provision in different ways for the education of a large number of children. This is now easily done, as the report of the Committee of Council on Education (England and Wales) gives ample information concerning the financial operations of the various School Boards in the country.

The duties of the Committee of Council on Education and of School Boards are somewhat different. The office of the former has been to stimulate others to undertake the work, and to help them to do their work well. It began by inviting the various religious bodies to erect Schools, and by offering to assist them with grants of money; it then sought to incite them to improve the quality of the education they gave by undertaking a share of their annual expenditure, and by assisting to train teachers better qualified efficiently to instruct their scholars; and beside this, to secure that the money it gave was not wasted, it provided for the annual inspection and examination of every School which it helped. It has now ceased to make grants towards building Schools, but it provides about one-third of the annual cost of the Schools which it inspects. The Education Department therefore originates no Schools, but assists all; and by the very complete system of inspection which it has established, it ably supervises very nearly the whole primary education of the country.

The School Boards were called into existence to fulfil a different office. It was alleged that the Voluntary system was unable to cope with the requirements of the country; that there were places where from inability or apathy no Schools, or an insufficient number of Schools, were provided; and that therefore there must be a power given to supplement Voluntary agencies, when they were found insufficient for the task. To accomplish this the School Boards are empowered to tax the community for educational purposes, to erect and maintain Schools where they are needed, whilst the rates supply that portion of their funds which in Voluntary Schools is furnished by subscriptions. In Voluntary Schools the cost is not very unequally divided between the payments of the children, the grant from Government, and subscriptions. Last year, in all the Schools in England and Wales receiving grants from the Education Depart-

ment, the children's pence amounted to £762,184; the Government grant to £861,657; the voluntary subscriptions to* £601,172. As Board Schools are entitled to the same Government grants as Voluntary Schools, and as the children instructed in them equally pay for their education, it would naturally be expected that the cost of supporting them would not be greatly in excess of what had to be provided for the maintenance of Voluntary Schools similarly circumstanced. And it would also be supposed that as Government would furnish the larger third of their anticipated annual expenditure, the burden imposed by the School Boards upon the ratepayers for educating about one-twelfth of the children receiving education, for whom alone they have any responsibility, would be much less than that imposed by the Education Department upon the taxpayers, as it had to furnish a very full third of the annual outlay incurred not by the School Boards only, but by all managers of efficient Schools as well.

This anticipation would be greatly strengthened by our examining the tables in the recent report of the Education Department. It shows that last year that Department assisted 12,246 Schools having 19,078 departments in which separate head teachers were employed: that these Schools provided accommodation for 2,871,826 children, and that the average attendance in them was 1,678,759. It also states that of this accommodation the School Boards had provided 838 Schools, with 1,404 independent departments, in which there were places for 245,508 children, whilst the average attendance was 138,293. Of the accommodation, therefore, in Schools receiving annual grants from the Education Department last year the proportion belonging to School Boards was 1 in 11·69; of the children in average attendance 1 in 12·14 was found in a Board School.

* It must be borne in mind that the school pence and the Government Grant include what was received in Board Schools as well as in Voluntary Schools, whilst the subscriptions apply only to the latter.

We next turn to the amount of money expended. During the year the Education Department spent on the various objects already named * £1,268,773; the School Boards £1,958,065. It is necessary to examine in detail the items of which these large sums are composed, that we may fairly understand their significance.

The Education Department spent £972,723 in direct grants to the various elementary Schools of the country, these grants constituting, as has been already shown, rather more than one third of their annual expenditure; £92,187 in annual grants to training colleges; £73,483 on inspection; £89,533 in the payment of building grants made before 1871, and organising districts under the Education Act; and £40,845 in management expenses.

The School Boards had to spend a large amount in providing additional school accommodation, and for this they are able to borrow upon the security of the rates; 2 per cent. of the principal being paid off every year, and interest at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Of the sum they expended, about £1,358,000 would be money thus borrowed, and the remainder, about £600,000, would represent the present annual charge; of this sum £139,582 were for management charges, such as salaries to officers of the Board, office charges, election expenses, &c. &c.

Having dealt with the statements in the Blue Book as they affect the whole body of Schools under School Boards, we would next quote from the same authority as to the average rate of expenditure in the various kinds of Schools which it assists. Each child at a Church School had spent upon its education £1. 10s. 11d.; in a British, Wesleyan, or other School not connected with the Church, £1. 11s. 4d.;

* It may be well to note, though I am not aware that it in any way affects my argument, that the accounts of the Education Department are made up for the year ending March 31, 1874; those of the School Boards for the year ending September 29, 1874.

in a Roman Catholic School £1. 8s. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; in a Board School £1. 15s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Of this sum the friends of denominational education provided by voluntary contributions 8s. 4·38d. in Church Schools; 5s. 6·16d. in British, Wesleyan, or other schools not connected with the Church; 7s. 11·82d. in Roman Catholic Schools; whilst the rate-payers had to furnish £1. 0s. 8·38d. for each child in a Board School.

If we look to the educational results achieved by this expenditure, it is as follows:—Of the children examined there passed, in reading, in Church Schools 87·18 per cent.; in Nonconformist Schools 88·63 per cent.; in Roman Catholic Schools 85·29 per cent.; in Board Schools 90·01 per cent. In writing, in Church Schools 71·06 per cent.; in Nonconformist Schools 71·85 per cent.; in Roman Catholic Schools 63·86 per cent.; in Board Schools 76·55 per cent. In arithmetic, in Church Schools 60·52 per cent.; in Nonconformist Schools 61·34 per cent.; in Roman Catholic Schools 48·69 per cent.; in Board Schools 68·15 per cent. In part explanation of the position occupied by Church Schools, it ought to be said that many of them are very small Schools in country places, and that such Schools can never be expected to secure educational results equal to those in large towns, where most of the other Schools are situated.

But it is not from figures so large as those just set down, when we have to take an average from a number of places very differently circumstanced, that we can obtain a result that quite satisfies our own mind. The figures ought to be known as a whole, in order to correct erroneous conclusions we might otherwise form from particular examples. They serve to show whether the instances more fully described are in harmony with the great mass of Schools throughout the country, or whether they are exceptions which represent only themselves. It is to establish such a standard that I

have quoted them; it is to enable my readers to see that the particular Schools about which I propose to speak at greater length are only typical examples of the great classes which they represent, that I have troubled them with a general statement. Let us now proceed to compare the cost and educational results of Board Schools and Voluntary Schools that are carrying on their work under similar circumstances.

The Schools managed by the London School Board have practically to deal with children of the same class, in whatever part of London they may be situated. If I were to select any one School, and to give the cost of its management and its educational results, I might be accused of selecting my example for the better support of my own views. I feel, therefore, that I shall convey a more accurate notion by drawing my argument from several Schools rather than from one, and then speaking afterwards of the differences which exist amongst them.

This is easily done, because every quarter the School Board issues a report of its School Management Committee. In this report is contained a copy of the accounts submitted to Her Majesty's Inspector, and of the results of his examination of every School which has been inspected during the preceding three months. I propose to take the two latest of these reports—those for Lady-day and Midsummer of this year—and make them my authority for the cost and educational results of the Board Schools in London.

In the Lady-day report there is included the accounts of 21 Schools with 36 departments, having an average attendance of 5,237 children, or rather more than 145 in each separately conducted School. The gross cost of the education of each of these children was £2. 2s. 0½d., towards which it contributed 7s. 4·28d. in school pence, and earned 7s. 4·86d. in Government grant, whilst the ratepayers had to pay, to make good the deficiency, £1. 7s. 0·66d. The Midsummer

report contains the accounts of 28 Schools with 54 departments, having an average attendance of 8,748 children, or 162 in each separately conducted School. The gross cost of the education of each of these children was £2. 6s. 11·69*d.*, towards which it contributed 8s. 0·95*d.* in school pence, earned 7s. 10·45*d.* in Government grant, whilst the ratepayers had to pay £1. 10s. 10·05*d.* to make good the deficiency. The small balance required to make up the difference between income and expenditure is derived from other sources. Taking the two returns together, we find that upon an average the gross cost* of each child's education was £2. 5s. 1·53*d.*, of which its own fees paid 7s. 9·7*d.*, whilst the ratepayers had to provide £1. 9s. 5·05*d.*

It is impossible to obtain an equally complete account of all the Church Schools in London examined during the same period, or I would gladly produce it. In the absence of such general statement I am obliged to bring forward particular Schools, of which I happen to possess accurate knowledge. All the Schools about to be named are described for this reason alone, and have not been selected in any way.

During the month of June two groups of Schools and a single School in Lambeth, with which I had been closely connected for many years, and of the Managing Committees of which I am still a member, were examined by Her Majesty's Inspector. I will compare the cost of these Schools with that of the Board Schools.

The first group of which I will speak is that of St. Peter's, Vauxhall.† It consists of four departments under separate head teachers—upper boys, lower boys, girls, and infants. The average attendance in these schools last year was 426, or an average of 106 in each department. The gross cost

* In order to present as accurate a picture as I can of the cost of Board Schools, I have inserted in the Appendix the balance-sheets of the most economically, and of the most expensively managed of these Schools, and also the balance-sheets of two of the large permanent Board Schools.

† See Appendix, for a copy of the balance-sheet.

of each child's education was £1. 19s. 9·38*d.*, towards which it contributed by school fees £1. 0s. 9·28*d.*, and earned by Government grant 14s. 9·56*d.*; whilst the proportion of cost which had to be furnished by voluntary contributions was 4s. 2·54*d.*

The second group, known as the St. Mary's, Prince's-road Schools,* consists of three Schools—boys, girls, and infants. The average attendance last year was 507, or an average of 169 in each department. The gross cost of the education of each child was £1. 7s. 5·55*d.*, of which it contributed 10s. 8·86*d.* in school fees; earned 11s. 10·9*d.* by Government grant; whilst the sum required from voluntary subscribers to balance the accounts was 4s. 9·79*d.*

There is yet another School, St. Saviour's, Salamanca.† This was intended for the lowest and the poorest, and has always been a ragged School in everything but the name. With the exception of a few children at the head of the School, every child pays a fee of only a penny a-week. It is a mixed School for girls and infants, and last year had an average attendance of 195. The gross cost of the education of each child was 23s. 8·58*d.*, of which it paid in school fees 4s. 9·11*d.*, and earned in Government grant 6s. 9·1*d.*; so that it was necessary to obtain from voluntary sources 12s. 2·37*d.* for each child to balance the accounts.

It will be observed that the cost of management in these schools varies with the fee charged. It is notorious that in London there are at all events three grades amongst the working classes—the artisans and small shopkeepers; the steady labouring people; and the costermonger class, including therein the dissolute and neglectful of all classes. These Schools were graded to meet the wants of these classes; in the upper group for many years we passed several boys at the Cambridge Middle Class Examination, and one of our boys

* See Appendix, for a copy of the balance-sheet.

† See Appendix, for a copy of the balance-sheet.

is now a scholar of one of the most distinguished Colleges in Cambridge. In the lowest School we had to deal with a nomad population, where the attendance was exceptionally bad, and the educational results exceptionally low; the former of these points is easily shown: with an average attendance of 195 only 40 children above seven years old and 80 infants had qualified themselves by the necessary number of attendances to be presented to Her Majesty's Inspector; whilst in St. Peter's Schools, with an average attendance of 426, 289 children above seven years old and 82 infants were so qualified; and in St. Mary's Schools, with an average attendance of 507, 263 children above seven years old and 111 infants were so qualified; and in the Board Schools, with an average attendance of 13,985, 7,169 children above seven years old, and 3,048 infants were so qualified. Every neighbourhood requires one such School, but its educational results are so much inferior to those of other Schools that it is not fair to compare them.

In the Board Schools the attempt is made to combine all these classes in one School. The fee is low, to induce the poorest to attend, whilst the cost of education is much greater than in the most costly of the upper Schools just described, in order to persuade artisans and others, able to pay a remunerative fee for the education of their children, to use the Schools: as yet the School Board has made no provision for the education of the most neglected class, and by a large majority refused to accept a motion that I proposed,* the object of which was to pledge them to make it their first care to provide for the educational wants of the poorest and lowest. There are no Board Schools which can be fairly compared with St. Saviour's, Salamanca, whilst all

* The motion I proposed was as follows: 'In all circumstances it shall be recognised as the primary duty of the School Board to secure School provision for the poorest children in every neighbourhood for which there is an insufficient supply of School accommodation.' On the 20th January 1875, this was rejected by 23 votes against 7.

their Schools are designed to educate together such children as are found in the Schools of St. Peter, Vauxhall, and St. Mary, Prince's-road, Lambeth.

To bring therefore into fuller contrast what has been just stated, I will place in tabular form the cost of the two systems :

	Average attendance in each department	Gross cost of education of each child	School fees during the year paid by each child	Government grant earned by each child	Cost of each child to subscriptions, rates, or other sources
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
London School Board . . }	155	2 5 1·53	0 7 9·7	0 7 8·35	1 9 7·48
St. Peter's, Vauxhall . }	106	1 19 9·38	1 0 9·28	0 14 9·56	0 4 2·54
St. Mary's, Lambeth . }	169	1 7 5·55	0 10 8·86	0 11 10·9	0 4 9·79

But it may be supposed that the educational results achieved by the different Schools will give a sufficient reason for the difference of cost. I will therefore next insert a comparative view of what these were :

	Average attendance	Number qualified for examination	Number examined	Per centage of passes in			Proportionate number of passes in special subjects, to children examined
				Reading	Writing	Arithmetic	
Board Schools . .	13,985	7,169	6,111	84·38	82·94	69·46	1 in 6
St. Peter's, Vauxhall	426	289	262	88·16	86·25	76·33	1 in 1·69
St. Mary's, Lambeth	507	263	210	88·09	89·04	80·95	1 in 3·28

Beside those qualified for examination, 3,048 infants were qualified for presentation in Board Schools, of whom 2,780 were presented ; 82 infants were qualified for presentation in St. Peter's Schools, of whom 67 were presented ; 111 infants were qualified for presentation in St. Mary's Schools, of whom 109 were presented.

Here then we have the materials for comparison between the cost and the educational results of the two systems. The gross cost of the education given in the Board Schools exceeds that in the St. Peter's Schools by 5*s.* 4*d.* per child ; the result of the teaching, as tested by Her Majesty's Inspector, is that St. Peter's Schools passed nearly four per cent. more children in reading, more than three per cent. more in writing, and nearly seven per cent. more in arithmetic than do the Board Schools, whilst they passed nearly four children in a special subject for every one passed in a Board School : and in like manner, to compare the St. Mary's Schools with the Board Schools, the cost of the education given in the former is less by 17*s.* 8*d.* per child than that given in the latter ; and yet, notwithstanding this enormous difference, the St. Mary's Schools passed nearly four per cent. more children in reading, more than six per cent. more in writing, and more than eleven per cent. more in arithmetic ; whilst it passed nearly two children in a special subject for every one passed in a Board School.

But it might be said that the percentage of children passed is no real test of the educational results of a School, because in some Schools every child that is qualified for examination is presented, whilst in others only those children are presented whom the teachers think are likely to pass. But in this case it cannot be said that more children have been withheld from examination in the Voluntary Schools than in the Board Schools ; for in the Board Schools 7,169 children were qualified for examination and only 6,111, or 85·24 per cent., were presented ; in St. Peter's Schools, of the 289 qualified, 262, or 90·65 per cent., were presented ; in St. Mary's Schools, of the 263 qualified, 210, or 79·84 per cent., were presented. I have no doubt that in every case every child was examined that the managers could persuade to attend for examination, and I only notice the point to guard against a cavil that might be raised.

The comparison would be very incomplete if it stopped here, for one great thing which I wish to point out is the difference of expenditure entailed by the two systems upon those who have to make good the deficiency. When we have examined the balance-sheet of the Voluntary Schools sent in to the Department we know the whole of the outgoings—whatever work beyond has to be done is done without charge; not so with the Board Schools. For the management of their affairs an expensive establishment of clerks &c. has to be kept up. The London School Board has expended more than £60,000 in erecting a building in which its business may be carried on; without reckoning anything for the heavy annual outlay which interest and the repayment of the principal of this large sum will entail upon the ratepayers, the portion of management expenses which would have to be allotted to each child in average attendance last year was 3s. 2½d. The average cost to the subscribers for the St. Peter's and St. Mary's Schools was 4s. 6·45d. per child, or about sixteen-pence more than that for managing the Board Schools. But we see the effect of this most clearly by looking at it in the mass, and as it would affect the pockets of those who have to make good the deficiency, excluding from our calculation all sums expended in providing the School buildings. Let us see what the difference would be if the one System or the other prevailed over the whole Metropolis. Taking in the cost of management, each child in a London Board School costs the ratepayers £1. 12s. 9·98d.; supposing 300,000* children to be each costing that sum, the amount required would be £492,475: each child in the Voluntary Schools costs the subscribers 4s. 6·45d.; at the same rate 300,000 children would cost

* The average attendance at efficient schools during the half-year ending Christmas last was 270,466; of whom 199,811 were in Voluntary Schools and 70,655 in Board Schools; there was then School accommodation for 382,493 children: for 283,868 in Voluntary Schools, and for 98,625 in Board Schools.

£68,062. So that in the one case a rate of nearly * $6\frac{1}{4}d.$ would be needed to make good the sum which would have to be supplied by those who are responsible for the Schools; in the other case a rate of three farthings would nearly suffice for that purpose. If the number of children for whom provision had to be made should be 400,000, then the cost to the ratepayers would be £656,633, or a rate of nearly $8\frac{1}{2}d.$ * in the pound if the scale of the expenditure of the School Board should be adopted; or £90,750, or something more than a penny in the pound, if the scale of expenditure of the Voluntary Schools was made to suffice.

To meet the possible objection which might be made that the Schools I have particularised were exceptional, I have obtained returns from a few parishes in other parts of the Metropolis; and these returns I shall give fully, whether they agree with or differ from the results which have been already detailed. I will do this in a tabular form.

	Average attendance in each department	Gross cost of education of each child	School Fees during the year paid by each child	Government grant earned by each child	Cost of each child to subscriptions, rates or other sources
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
London Board Schools .	155	2 5 1.53	0 7 9.7	0 7 8.35	1 9 7.48
Christ Church, St. George's in the East } St. Thomas, Columbia } Market }	117 111	1 6 2.93 1 0 7	0 10 3.14 0 8 4.76	0 12 4.98 0 10 9.35	0 3 6.81 0 1 4.89
Islington, St. Anne's, Tollington Park . . } St. Paul's, Bentineck } Schools, Grove St., } Lisson Grove . . . }	120 198	†1 13 5.3 1 11 8.09	0 13 0.19 0 13 8.44	0 11 6.32 0 13 10.98	0 8 10.79 0 4 0.67
St. Mark's, Clerkenwell .	128	†1 7 4.88	0 12 5.77	0 11 0.77	0 3 10.34
St. Jude's, Bethnal Green	119	1 5 2.43	0 11 4.6	0 10 11.97	0 2 9.86

* The Report of the Education Department (1875) states that the London School Board had then raised by loan £1,073,700, and agreed to borrow £1,067,590 more. Upon this $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. has to be paid annually, the amount of interest slightly diminishing every year. At first the annual charge would be £117,770, which would require an *additional* rate of $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound.

† In each of these schools the total cost includes the payment of a heavy ground-rent.

	Average attendance	*Number Examined	Per centage of passes in			Proportionate number of passes in special subjects, to children examined
			Read- ing	Writ- ing	Arith- metic	
Board Schools	13,985	6,111	84·38	82·94	69·46	1 in 6
Christ Church, St. George's } in the East	351	169	89·94	76·92	63·9	1 in 16·9
St. Thomas, Columbia } Market	334	105	86·66	93·33	39·04	
Islington, St. Anne's, Tol- } lington Park	241	153	92·15	76·47	71·24	1 in 11·76
St. Paul's, Bentinck } Schools, Grove Street, } Lisson Grove	595	361	95·01	91·68	89·75	1 in 2·75
St. Mark's, Clerkenwell . .	385	171	89·47	73·09	78·94	1 in 19
St. Jude's, Bethnal Green. .	357	138	86·95	83·33	68·11	1 in 5·3

If it were desirable further to multiply evidence, it would be easy to do so. When it is remembered that taking all England and Wales into the account, the average sum provided by subscription for the education of each child in average attendance in Church Schools is 8s. 4·38*d.*, it will be seen that few Schools in London or in any large town can cost much more than do the Schools whose accounts I have set before my readers. For in small country parishes, where the attendance does not exceed 20 or 25, the cost per head must necessarily be very great, and of such Schools and Schools of a somewhat larger size the Church has many in the thinly peopled parts of the country. Of the cost of one of these small Schools I will give an example, comparing it with the expenditure in a Board School of equal size.

The National School in the small country parish of Mark-beech, in the county of Kent, had last year an average attendance of 25; the expenditure was for salary of teachers, £70; for books and school material, £1. 11s. 7*d.*; for fuel and

* The number examined appears small when compared with the average attendance; but the explanation of this is, that most of the Schools referred to have an Infant department.

cleaning, £5. 10s. 6d.; in all £77. 2s. 1d., or £3. 1s. 8·2d. for the education of each child. Of this it contributed in school pence 8s. 0·96d., earned in Government grant 14s. 1·92d., whilst £1. 19s. 5·32d. had to be provided from other sources. Of the children presented to Her Majesty's Inspector for examination 86·66 per cent. passed in reading; all passed in writing, and 93·33 in arithmetic, whilst 1 in 7·5 of the children presented for examination passed in a special subject.

For the accounts of a Board School I am obliged to rely upon the Blue Book. The smallest Board School in Kent is that at Worth, where the average attendance last year was 40, and I do not shrink from comparing it with Mark-beech, though the difference in the number of children is of that kind that ought to make the smaller School nearly double as costly per child as the larger one. At Worth £67. 16s. is paid as salary of the teacher; £12. 3s. 1d. for books, apparatus, and stationery; £3. 12s. for printing, postage, advertising, and office charges; £8. 14s. 6d. for rent, taxes, and insurance; £14. 5s. 6d. for fuel and light; and £16. 19s. 0d. for the salaries of officers of the Board, and 13s. 5d. for other expenses. This gives £3. 2s. 1 05d. for the cost of the education of each child: a sum a trifle in excess of that expended on each child at Mark-beech; though in the one case the cost had to be divided amongst 25 children, in the other amongst 40. I ought to add that in estimating the cost of the Worth School I have taken no notice of a sum of £41. 12s. 1d. expended on "purchase of, and repairs to, furniture and cleaning;" £10. 9s. 8d. on legal expenses, and £569. 4s. 9d. in purchase of land and buildings. Each child at Worth paid towards the cost of its education in school fees 5s. 8·7d., and earned in Government grant 13s. 10·8d., leaving £2. 2s. 5·55d. to be provided by the rates, which involved a rate in the parish of 3·16d. in the pound. The cost of buying land and building was, no doubt, met by a loan.

There is another class of Schools of which it may be well to speak, as they exist in considerable numbers all over the country. I refer to such as would be aptly represented by the Schools of Speldhurst, in the county of Kent. There, with a population of about 1,000, there is a boys' School and a mixed School for girls and infants, with an average attendance last year in the two Schools of 137 children. The expenditure on the Schools was, for teachers' salaries, £199. 18s. 3d.; for books and stationery, £13. 16s. 4d.; for fuel and cleaning, £17. 1s. 7d.; for repairs and printing, £8. 16s. 9d.; for rates and insurance, £1. 13s. 11d.; for sundries, £3. 7s. 4d. in all, £244. 14s. 2d., or £1. 15s. 8·68d. for each child; of which it paid in school pence 8s. 0·7d., and earned in Government grant 13s. 5·78d., leaving 14s. 2·2d. to be provided from other sources. Of the 101 children qualified for examination by Her Majesty's Inspectors 86 were examined; and of these there passed 95·34 per cent. in reading, 76·74 per cent. in writing, and 76·74 per cent. in arithmetic; 1 in 28·66 of those presented for examination passed in a special subject. The Board School in the county which most nearly resembled that of Speldhurst is at Farnborough, in the parish of Chelsfield. There the average is 113, or 24 less than at Speldhurst. There the amount paid for salaries of teachers is £280. 6s. 5d.; for books, apparatus, and stationery, £17. 10s. 3d.; for printing, postage, advertising, and office charges, £6. 19s. 9d.; for rent, rates, taxes, and insurance, £19. 9s. 2d.; for purchase of, and repairs to furniture and cleaning, £27. 13s. 3d.; for fuel and light, £20. 8s. 6d.; and then for management expenses, £10 for salaries of officers of the Board, and £9. 19s. for other expenses; in all, £392. 6s. 4d., or £3. 9s. 5·23d. for each child. Of this sum each child paid in school pence 7s. 5·1d., and earned Government grant 14s. 8·5d., leaving £2. 7s. 3·63d. to be paid by the ratepayers. The rate levied was 18d. in the pound.

Between these groups of Schools it is not quite so easy to institute a comparison as it is between Schools so similarly circumstanced as are those in London; but I think that by comparing the items of expenditure in the two cases, those who are familiar with school management will see that economy is not confined to those who are responsible for Voluntary Schools in towns, and that lavish expenditure flourishes in country School Boards as well as in those in town.

There is yet another comparison between Voluntary Schools and Board Schools which ought to be made to complete our picture; and that is, between them as they are found in borough towns. I am able to obtain the information I need for Brighton, and therefore I will place it before my readers. The Voluntary Schools I will take are the Central schools—boys, girls, and infants; the St. Peter's schools—boys, girls, and infants; and the Warwick Street Schools—boys and infants. In these Schools there was last year an average attendance of 1,474 children; the average cost of the education of each child was £1. 9s. 3·71*d.*, of which it paid in school fees 9s. 9·87*d.*, earned in Government grant 14s. 1·58*d.*; leaving 5s. 4·26*d.* to be supplied from other sources. The School Board for Brighton has 9 sets of Schools, including 18 departments. In these the average attendance from Lady Day 1874 to Lady Day 1875 was 2,229.* The total annual expenditure, excluding all payments on account of purchase of land, School buildings, and such like, amounted to £5,559. 3s. 1*d.*, or £2. 9s. 10·61*d.* per child. In this sum is included cost of management, as it cannot be seen from the published accounts what sums belong to such expenditure, and what are wholly made for the direct benefit of the Schools. Of this

* At least this is given as the average attendance when the Schools were examined during the half-year between Lady Day and Michaelmas; and as the attendance had steadily increased, it is probable that during the time stated above it was less than the number given above.

sum each child paid in school fees 8s. 0·35*d.*, earned in Government grant 9s. 6·33*d.*, leaving £1. 12s. 3·93*d.* to be supplied by the ratepayers of the town. In June last there was an average attendance at all the efficient Schools in the town—Voluntary and Board—of 10,412 children; if the whole of these children were being educated at Schools like the Voluntary Schools of which I have just spoken, the amount to be supplied from some other sources, after their pence and the Government grant had been received, would be £2,787. 16s. 3·12*d.*; but if they were all being educated in Board Schools the amount to be supplied, after the deductions just enumerated had been made, would be £16,829. 13s. 11*d.* In Brighton a rate of a penny in the pound produces about £1,600. If therefore all the deficiencies had to be made good by rate, it would suffice to levy a rate of 1¾*d.*, if the scale of expenditure incurred by the Voluntary Schools was adopted; but if that of the School Board was preferred, a rate of 10½*d.* would not suffice. There are probably in Brighton as many ratepayers who prefer the Voluntary School system as there are who like the Board School system best; why should the former be compelled to pay rates to support the extravagant expenditure of the latter system, to the injury of that system which they would wish to sustain; when the inevitable result of its success must be to saddle them with a still heavier burden? Would it not be much fairer, and much more in accordance with the principles that have recently governed legislation on such subjects in this country, if both were allowed to appropriate their school-rates to the sustentation of that system which, in their opinion, is best for the community?

There are two points which such an examination as this forces upon our notice. The first is, whether it is absolutely necessary for the country to continue a system which is proved to be much more costly, and not a whit more efficient than the old one. The old machinery still exists; the

excessive competition and the increased costliness which the Boards have forced upon all school managers have not yet succeeded in destroying the great mass of Voluntary Schools ; but there is danger lest they may do so. Time is on their side, for it is difficult to maintain for a long time the unequal struggle between a system of boundless resources, as a rating system virtually is, and a system which depends upon individual benevolence, and which may in a parish at any time be overthrown by the folly or apathy of those to whom its administration is committed, or by the selfishness of a few persons.

But there is a second consideration. Those who are struggling to maintain the Voluntary system are themselves payers of school rates, where school rates are levied. Is it equitable, after the destruction of Church rates, to compel them to uphold a system of education to which they object on account of the religious teaching, or want of religious teaching, by which it is characterised ? Is it right that a number of persons who prove the reality and the depth of their convictions by the sacrifices they make to uphold the Schools which they approve should be taxed to support a system to which they are conscientiously opposed, and which can only succeed by destroying that system of which they conscientiously approve ?

In Canada they solve this difficult question by allowing more kinds of Schools than one, and by permitting all rate-payers to allocate their rates to those Schools of whose religious teaching they approve. Why should not we have a like system in England ? It would be just to all. The Churchman could then support the Schools he approves by his rates ; and so could the Roman Catholic, and the Wesleyan, and the Nonconformist, and the unbeliever. Probably the present system would have the fewest friends, but if so, what condemnation of it could be more severe ? for, if so, the great mass of people are paying for that which they dislike,

and to which they are opposed on the ground of religious belief. But people say it would be difficult to establish a system that would be just to all. Of course it would be difficult; but then so it always is to construct a system in which a variety of interests have to be considered, and in which it is sought to do justice to all. The tyrant, whether he be a king or a multitude, avoids the difficulty by insisting on making all bow to his will; but in England we profess to desire liberty for all, and to press rudely upon the consciences of none. Why then should not the task of a fair adjustment be attempted? It ought to be a peculiar satisfaction to Conservative statesmen to deal with this question, and to protect the fair rights of men who are suffering because they have a definite religious belief. We have no reason to suppose that they are insensible to this, or that they will shrink from doing what we believe to be their duty to the country more than to their own party. If they make the attempt we are satisfied that in this case they will find no difficulties which cannot easily be surmounted.

APPENDIX.

It is necessary that I should examine a statement of Mr. Ricks, one of the Examiners appointed by the London School Board, which bears on this subject, and I prefer to do it in an appendix in order that I may not interrupt the thread of the argument in the text. In his report, dated May 1875, he says :

‘Of course this standard compares most unfavourably with Voluntary Schools, but then it must be borne in mind that the Board teacher has at present the most unfavourable material to work upon, and the most unskilful hands to work with. Whilst there are vacant places in Board Schools the teachers cannot refuse admission to any children of school age, however ignorant; the teacher in the Voluntary School can pick and choose. They (the Board Schools) are filled with unwilling scholars, driven in, and kept in, by the Board visitors. Not only are the Board teachers at a disadvantage from the materials on which they have to work, but also from the youth and inexperience of a large proportion of the teaching staff. When I remember that in a staff of a little over 1,300 teachers (inclusive), 270 are young, inexperienced candidates, and considerably over 300 are pupil teachers in their first or second years, I think there is reason to be satisfied with the progress made in the past year.’

The admission with which this statement opens, that the standard work in the London Board Schools compares most unfavourably with Voluntary Schools, is no doubt true, and when the cost of the two systems is also compared, it needs to be excused. No doubt Mr. Ricks gives the best excuses available, but I think I shall have no difficulty in showing that the excuses he gives have no basis in fact. I have no doubt the Board Schools suffer from the causes he mentions, but the Voluntary Schools equally suffer from the same causes, whilst they do not enjoy the advantages he alleges.

Take, first, the quality of the scholars. So long as there are vacant places Voluntary Schools accept all the children that present themselves just as much as Board Schools do; and when the Schools are well filled the teachers of Board Schools pick and choose just as much as the teachers of Voluntary Schools do. We are perpetually told at the Board that the visitors send the children impartially to Voluntary Schools and to Board Schools, and if so, the number of unwilling children is likely to be as great in one kind of Schools as in the other. It is not to be forgotten that, at all events, one correspondence has appeared in the papers in which the managers of a superior Voluntary School complained of having to receive a number of ragged urchins who were driven in by the visitors. Nor must it be forgotten that the great increase of children attending efficient Schools arises from the war which has been waged upon private Schools. The many complaints of the teachers of such Schools who have been ruined by the action of the School Board, which have appeared in the papers, prove this, not less conclusively than do the returns of the Bye-laws Committee. The mass of children, therefore, who are driven into efficient Schools do not belong to the poorest class, but to the class which preferred private Schools to public Schools, a full proportion of whom would be likely to prefer Voluntary to Board Schools; and I can positively assert that I never heard of a child being refused admission at a Voluntary School on account of its ignorance. I have not inserted the proof Mr. Ricks gives of the low condition of one School, because I do not wish to lengthen out this note; but nothing would have been easier than to have produced corresponding cases in Voluntary Schools.

What Mr. Ricks says about the teachers is not less fatal to what he wants to prove—that Board Schools are at a disadvantage in comparison with Voluntary Schools. He says, that “of a little over 1,300 teachers, 270 are candidates, and 300 pupil teachers in their first or second year.” This leaves more than 730 for the number of certificated teachers and pupil teachers in their fifth, fourth, or third year, a proportion far beyond what is to be found in Voluntary Schools. Last year, in 19,978 Schools in England and Wales, there were employed 20,162 certificated teachers, 1,999 assistant teachers, 6,219 pupil teachers in their

first year, 6,512 in their second year, 6,088 in their third year, 5,093 in their fourth year, and 3,409 in their fifth year. Compare this with what Mr. Ricks finds in the schools with which he has to deal. In 190 schools there are 730 certificated teachers, or pupil teachers in their fifth, fourth, or third year; 300 pupil teachers in their second or first year, and 270 candidates. I am compelled to take the figures for all England from the Blue Book, for comparison, because I have no means of ascertaining the number of teachers in Voluntary Schools from any other source; but, at a glance, it will be seen that the proportion of experienced teachers in the London Board Schools must be much greater than would be found in other Schools. When it is remembered that the School Boards have a bottomless pocket from which to draw, whilst the managers of Voluntary Schools have to give or beg what funds are needed for their Schools—when it is remembered that the School Board have greatly increased salaries and thus have drawn into their service some of the best teachers from Voluntary Schools, it will be obvious how mistaken must be the statement that Board Schools “have the most unskilful hands to work with.” And in the particular case of the Board Schools in London, how are we to account for the great excess of their expenditure over that of the Schools with which I have compared them, if the hands with which they work are so much less skilful? It must be remembered that the Board has nearly completed the fifth year of its existence, so that it has had ample time to perfect its arrangements.

If I were asked to account for the fact that Voluntary Schools, at so much less cost, have achieved the results spoken of, I should do it by pointing to the cheaper and more efficient way in which private firms manage their business than do public companies. The personal loving care of managers interested in and responsible for the Schools will accomplish results at a cost which never can be hoped for in Schools managed as Board Schools must be.

**BALANCE-SHEET OF ST. PETER'S SCHOOLS, VAUXHALL.
UPPER AND LOWER BOYS, GIRLS, AND INFANTS.**

Average Attendance . . . 426.

Dr.	£	s.	d.	Cr.	£	s.	d.
To Government Grant for 1873-4	.	.	315 5 0	By Master and Mistress	.	.	440 9 8
„ Children's Pence	.	.	442 9 7	„ Pupil-Teachers &c.	.	.	210 14 6
„ Subscriptions &c.	.	.	89 12 7	„ Furniture, Repairs, &c.	.	.	79 19 0
				„ Books, Stationery, Apparatus	.	.	70 3 1
				„ Fuel &c.	.	.	25 17 11
				„ Rates, Taxes, Insurance	.	.	20 3 0
							£847 7 2

i.e. Gross Cost of each child's education = £1. 19s. 9.38d.

BALANCE-SHEET of ST. SAVIOUR'S SALAMANCA SCHOOLS, in the Parish of ST. MARY-THE-LESS, LAMBETH.
MIXED GIRLS AND INFANTS.

Average Attendance = 195.

Dr.				Cr.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Government Grant	.	.	.	By Mistress	.	.	.
" School Pence	.	.	.	" Assistants	.	.	.
" Material Sold	.	.	.	" Pupil Teachers	.	.	.
" Subscriptions and Donations	.	.	.	" Monitors	.	.	.
				" Books and Apparatus	.	.	.
				" Fuel and Light	.	.	.
				" Furniture and Cleaning	.	.	.
				" Repairs to Bags	.	.	.
				" Rent, Rates, etc.	.	.	.
				" Prizes	.	.	.
				" Small Items	.	.	.
</							

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE HIGH STREET, ELTHAM, BOARD SCHOOL.
MIXED SCHOOL UNDER A MISTRESS.

Average Attendance = 56.

Dr.		Cr.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Government Grant	56 4 0	By Teachers' Salaries	223 9 4
„ Children's Pence	32 16 8	„ Repairs of Furniture &c.	43 8 6
„ Rates	266 15 8	„ Books, Stationery, and Apparatus	24 13 3
		„ Fuel &c.	11 1 7
		„ Repairs of Building	44 6 4
		„ Rates, Taxes, and Insurance	7 3 8
		„ Other Expenses	1 13 8
			£355 16 4

i.e. Gross Cost of each child's education = £6. 7s. 1d.

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE MANSFIELD STREET, SOUTHWARK, BOARD SCHOOL. INFANT SCHOOL.

Average Attendance = 217.

DR.				CR.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Government Grant	.	.	0	.	.	216 1 2
" Children's Pence	.	.	8	.	.	6 9 3
" Rates	.	.	10	.	.	19 9 7
<hr/>				By Teachers' Salaries	.	.
				" Books, Stationery, and Apparatus, &c.	.	.
				" Repairs of Furniture &c.	.	.
				" Repairs of Building	.	.
				" Fuel &c.	.	.
<hr/>				" Other Expenses	.	.
<hr/>						
						<hr/>
						£249 2 6
						<hr/>

i.e. Gross Cost of each child's education = £1. 3s. 0d.

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE HUNTER STREET, SOUTHWARK, PERMANENT BOARD SCHOOL.

BOYS, GIRLS, AND INFANTS.

Average Attendance = 967.

Dr.		Cr.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Government Grant	. . . 198 6 0	By Teachers' Salaries	. . . 1,310 12 4
" Children's Pence	. . . 254 9 7	" Books, Stationery, and Apparatus	. . . 23 5 5
" Rates	. . . 1,347 10 1	" Fuel &c.	. . . 121 10 9
" Other sources	. . . 1 16 0	" Repairs of Furniture &c.	. . . 142 11 4
		" Repairs of Buildings	. . . 32 16 11
		" Rates, Taxes, and Insurance	. . . 129 2 3
		" Other Expenses	. . . 42 2 8
			<u>£1,802 1 8</u>

i.e. Gross Cost of each child's education = £1. 17s. 4d.

